

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 STATE 017241
ORIGIN IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 SIG-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07
NSAE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02 HA-05 /059 R

DRAFTED BY IO/UNP:STESCUDERO/ATP
APPROVED BY AF/S:DPETTERSON
IO/UNP:RLBARRY
-----102678 212029Z /50

R 211657Z JAN 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

UNCLAS STATE 017241

CAPETOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PORG, SF, WA

SUBJECT: NEW YORK TIMES EDITORIAL ON SOUTH AFRICA

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION THIS CABLE TRANSMITS THE TEXT OF
AN EDITORIAL IN THE JANUARY 20 NYT ENTITLED "STACKING THE
DECK IN SOUTHERN AFRICA."

2. BEGIN TEXT: "WHEN SOUTH AFRICA'S PARLIAMENT CONVENES
NEXT WEEK, PRIME MINISTER JOHN VORSTER IS LIKELY TO AN-
NOUNCE PLANS FOR GRANTING RAPID INDEPENDENCE, UNDER BLACK
LEADERSHIP, TO NAMIBIA (SOUTH-WEST AFRICA), THE FORMER
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 017241

GERMAN COLONY WHICH PRETORIA HAS RUN FOR HALF A CENTURY.
IN RHODESIA, AN ANNOUNCEMENT OF A SIMILAR SORT MAY COME
SOON FROM THE WHITE MINORITY GOVERNMENT OF IAN SMITH,
WHICH HAS BEEN NEGOTIATING WITH THREE BLACK LEADERS FOR THE
COMING OF MAJORITY RULE.

"THESE RESULTS, LONG SOUGHT BY NAMIBIAN AND RHODESIAN

BLACKS, WOULD, A DECADE AGO, HAVE WON APPLAUSE ABROAD. YET NOW THEY WILL NOT, AND GOVERNMENTS WITH INFLUENCE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA--THE UNITED STATES BEING ONE--SHOULD MAKE THEIR OPPOSITION CLEAR. FOR IF MESSRS. VORSTER AND SMITH HAVE THEIR WAY, ONLY THE TRAPPINGS OF POLITICAL POWER IN BOTH COUNTRIES WILL BE TRANSFERRED FROM WHITES TO BLACKS.

THE ELEMENTS OF WHITE ECONOMIC POWER, AND MANY OF THE PRIVILEGES THAT GO WITH IT, WILL BE ESSENTIALLY UN-
DISTURBED. AND IMPORTANT BLACK NATIONALIST GROUPS ARE LIKELY TO BE ALTOGETHER FROZEN OUT OF THE PROCESS OF FORMING GOVERNMENTS AND LEFT TO CONTINUE THEIR OPPOSITION THROUGH GUERRILLA WARFARE.

"IN NAMIBIA, THE SOUTH AFRICANS SEVERELY RESTRICT THE ACTIVITIES OF THE SOUTH-WEST AFRICAN PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATION (SWAPO), AND HAVE IMPRISONED MANY OF ITS LEADERS. ROOTED LARGELY IN THE OVAMBO TRIBE, WHOSE MEMBERS ARE NEARLY HALF OF NAMIBIA'S 800,000 PEOPLE, SWAPO'S AIM HAS BEEN TO CREATE A UNITARY STATE INCORPORATING ALL THE VAST COUNTRY'S DOZEN ETHNIC GROUPS, INCLUDING THE 91,000 WHITES WHO ARE ITS SECOND-LARGEST ELEMENT. THE SOUTH AFRICAN AUTHORITIES, HOWEVER, HAVE EMPHASIZED COMMUNAL DIFFERENCES AS A WAY OF PERPETUATING WHITE CONTROL. THEIR HOPE NOW IS THAT QUICK ELECTIONS FOR A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY, BEFORE SWAPO HAS A CHANCE TO ORGANIZE AN EFFECTIVE
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 017241

CAMPAIGN, WILL KEEP POWER IN THE HANDS OF A COALITION OF WHITES AND OBLIGING TRIBAL CHIEFS AND HEADMEN. FEARING DEFEAT, SWAPO HAS THUS FAR NOT AGREED TO TAKE PART, AND SAYS IT WILL CONTINUE THE "ARMED STRUGGLE."

"IN RHODESIA, JOSHUA NKOMO, THE EARLIEST OPPONENT OF THE SMITH REGIME, AND ROBERT MUGABE, WHO ORGANIZED THE GUERRILLA WAR, ARE TAKING NO PART IN THE NEGOTIATIONS NOW UNDER WAY. THEY MAY FEAR THAT THEY WOULD LOSE AN ELECTION TO THE BLACK LEADERS NOW AT MR. SMITH'S CONFERENCE TABLE. BUT THEY CAN SCARCELY LIKE THE DEAL BEING WORKED OUT. THE OBJECT OF THE WHITE NEGOTIATORS IN BOTH NAMIBIA AND RHODESIA IS THE SAME: TO ENGINEER NEW CONSTITUTIONS THAT WILL GIVE THE WHITE MINORITY COMMUNITIES VETOES OVER ANY ACTIONS BY SUCCESSOR GOVERNMENTS THAT MIGHT THREATEN THEIR ECONOMIC POWER. THE CONSTITUTION FOR AN INDEPENDENT NAMIBIA WILL BE WRITTEN BY THOSE ELECTED IN THE COMING CAMPAIGN--HENCE SOUTH AFRICA'S EFFORT TO STACK THE ELECTORAL DECK. BY CONTRAST, MR. SMITH HAS SAID IN EFFECT THAT HE WILL TRANSFER POWER ONLY UNDER A CONSTITUTION THAT SAFEGUARDS THE INTERESTS OF RHODESIA'S 3 PERCENT WHITE POPULATION.

"MR. SMITH AND MR. VORSTER OBVIOUSLY HOPE THAT THE DEALS BEING WORKED OUT FOR BOTH COUNTRIES, BY PLACING MODERATE BLACKS IN POSITIONS OF VISIBLE POWER, WILL SIPHON SUPPORT FROM THE NATIONALIST GUERRILLA LEADERS. THEY ALSO HOPE THAT THE EMERGING SEEMINGLY LIBERAL CONSTITUTIONS WILL HAVE APPEAL IN THE WEST. WESTERN LIBERALS SHOULD REMEMBER, HOWEVER, THAT THE POSITIONS THE WHITE COMMUNITIES ARE TRYING TO PRESERVE WERE ATTAINED BY EXPLOITING THE CHEAP LABOR OF BLACKS WHO HAVE BEEN SYSTEMATICALLY RE-PRESSED. IT IS UNDERSTANDABLE THAT WHITES SHOULD WANT TO MAINTAIN THEIR DOMINANCE. BUT SO IS IT UNDERSTANDABLE THAT THEIR NATIONALIST OPPONENTS SHOULD WANT NO PART OF IT.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 017241

"THE WEST HAS GREATER INFLUENCE OVER EVENTS IN NAMIBIA THAN IN RHODESIA. CONCERNED ABOUT OUTSIDE REACTION, MR. VORSTER HAS FOR SOME TIME CONSULTED THE MAJOR WESTERN GOVERNMENTS OVER HIS PLANS TO MOVE NAMIBIA FORWARD TO INDEPENDENCE. THEIR PRESSURE HAS WON SOME CONCESSIONS. NOW THEY SHOULD MAKE CLEAR THAT THEY WILL NOT RECOGNIZE THE PUPPET STATE THAT WOULD EMERGE FROM RUSHED ELECTIONS, RIGGED TO NEUTRALIZE SWAPO. AND THEY SHOULD NOT RELAX OUTSIDE PRESSURE ON RHODESIA -- UNITED NATIONS SANCTIONS ARE STILL IN FORCE -- UNTIL REAL MAJORITY RULE HAS BEEN ACHIEVED. MR. SMITH'S ENTRENCHED SAFEGUARDS FOR WHITE INTERESTS MIGHT BE ACCEPTABLE, PROVIDED THEY ARE INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS, VALID FOR A FIXED PERIOD. HE KNOWS THAT BLACKS WILL ACHIEVE FULL POWER IN RHODESIA SOME DAY. IT IS IN THE INTEREST OF ALL RHODESIANS THAT THEY SHOULD DO SO THROUGH A PROCESS THAT SEEMS GENUINELY LEGITIMATE AT EVERY STAGE." END TEXT.

CHRISTOPHER

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, INDEPENDENCE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE017241
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: STESCUDERO/ATP
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780033-0288
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780136/aaaabeow.tel
Line Count: 155
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 700a25e1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN IO
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3734313
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NEW YORK TIMES EDITORIAL ON SOUTH AFRICA
TAGS: PORG, SF, WA
To: PRETORIA GABORONE MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/700a25e1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014